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PRIESTHOOD

Its Birth and Life and Hold Upon the Destinies of the World

(By Judge Parish B. Ladd.)

From the silent ages of the by-gone and the living records of our time, we gather the facts concerning the birth and life of the world's priesthood. Under the various names, such as the medicine man, the augur, the soothsayer, the sorcerer, the diviner, the juggler, the kohen, the rabbi, the clergyman, the minister, the pupitree, all are but so many different names belonging to and coming under the general appellation or designation of

Under such names they have held in their grasp the destinies of the world—a body of men, who are the makers of all the gods, religious and sacred books, which, from the remotest antiquity, have crushed the human race. All of this class have ever claimed to be the accredited agents of their gods, with power to call down the wrath or pleasure of their heavenly monarchs on the heads of a world's believers or unbelievers.

On numerous occasions heretofore I have, to some extent, given details of this clerical plant, the rise, criminal life and progress of the priestly hierarchy which took its rise with the Essenes and Therians some 200 years before the time assigned to the mythical Christ, was continued without change of principles when these societies threw off their old titles and merged in one body under the name, Christian, about the 140 of our vulgar era; and from after that date the sect has been known as Christian, meaning a collection or association of pious men, worshippers for a time of the Hebrew God Jehovah; lastly three gods—Jehovah; his son, the good, personified to represent a man called Christ, to which was added the priest Jesus, Savior. By this words are spoken to another originally meant to be good (meaning holy) is salvation. The Holy Ghost, meaning wind or breath of Jehovah, being finally added to make a trinity, which all the pangs had.

The scope of this thesis will be limited to findings of fact and general deductions therefrom, from the birth of Christianity to the present time. For the proof of such findings and conclusions, I refer the reader to my numerous writings along this line.

The Christian priesthood is a thing unto itself; it finds in the world's history no parallel. Religion is as old as primitive man on earth; its foundation was ignorance—ignorance of the laws of nature; from this ignorance came fear, which is the foundation of all religion. Among all the earth's inhabitants, no animal other than man has ever developed a religion. Instinct and the sealed law of reasoning of inanimate nature, before man, was sufficient to impress them that an appeal to higher powers brought no results; nor would primitive man ever have thought otherwise except for the importunities of the priesthood, who have ever been the bane of the world.

The beasts of the fields, the fowls of the air, and even the fishes of the sea, instinctively know the useless waste of prayer—a call on the immutable powers of nature for favors. Supreme Nature, who moves under fixed laws, without thought, purpose or design, needs no worship, no service of man, or any other animal.

Man, the most ignorant, and least wise in this respect, arrogant and supine as a zoological primate, seeing Nature's blind, purposeless forces around him, took them for supreme beings, or the hidden spirits of celestial powers above the earth, of which he was a less potent type. He, in his primitive ignorance, has thus created the first gods, being the producers of the phenomena around him, he appealed to them for protection

from harm. Thus we have the origin of religion.

At this stage of the primate's life, the more crafty, seeing their opportunity for gain, assumed to intervene between these heavenly powers and their clients, for the protection of the latter from the wrath of the former. In dreadful fear of the direful elements, this stupid primate readily assented to the will and wishes of the intervening and to pay tribute to his services. Thus we have the origin of the priesthood, and its duped men and women of little brains who give implicit faith and heed to their priests, who, in the morn of life, now and then, have ever sought to keep their votaries in ignorance, that they (the priests) may profit thereby.

Of the tribes and peoples of the ancient world, each had worked out for itself, its own gods and priesthoods, who give implicit faith and heed to their priests, who, in the morn of life, now and then, have ever sought to keep their votaries in ignorance, that they (the priests) may profit thereby.

This being conceded as a natural right, the many pagan systems respected the gods and religions of all others, as in the Roman Empire, when it allowed the gods of the Etruscans and Greeks to be set up in its own cities. By this toleration, all the religions moved on, side by side, in union and harmony, as one stupendous whole. Under such provisions there could be no quarreling. The religious world was at peace with itself and all mankind.

Such was the state of things at the time of the birth of Christianity and the rise of its priesthood, when a new era of strife and terror was ushered in. The peace and harmony of the old pagan world was to be supplanted by a long reign of strife, terror, torture, poverty, death, desolation, learning, and the loss of civilization. In a word, for fourteen hundred years the world was to groan and suffer under the despotic rule and ruin of the Christian priesthood.

Christianity, in the morn of its life, drew all of its recruits from the lowest of the low. Beggars, thieves, outcasts, old women and children, all of the most ignorant class, entered its fold, and became the life of the system—despised and held in contempt by the scholars, and even by the pagans of the world. As such people then, and at all times, have constituted a large majority of our race, the accession to the ranks of Christianity were very rapid.

Let it here not be forgotten that many of the ancient philosophic and civil rulers deemed (as do today) that religion of some kind was necessary to curb the passions and hold the multitude in subjection. On this theory, non-believers have loaned and now loan, their influence to the support of the prevailing superstition.

From the very start these Christian cattle, with the priests at their head, denounced all the other religions of the world as false, wild and pernicious, unworthy of fellowship and enemies of the true God, who being a con-sideration of the three in one, demanded exclusive worship from all mankind; that it was their duty to force all to submit to Christianity and obey the dictates of the priests.

These claims, as was natural, arrayed all the rest of the world against the new sect, and even antagonized the different Christian sects against each other, for at a very early date a diversity of opinion, represented by different sects, had grown up, each claim-

ing to be the true orthodoxy. It was between these different sects that the early Christians waged their first wars—conflicts to determine which was orthodox and which was heterodox. In these sanguinary conflicts the weaker party, or at least their leaders, were either put to death or banished. Often these quarrels became so sanguinary as to involve the slaughter of whole communities. At times, the majority shifted from side to side, when the weaker went down to death as a penalty for their attempt to differ with the majority. Nor was it of rare occurrence that the minority at one time became the majority another, depending on the opinion of the civil ruler, or that of a Bishop. In this way an incessant war was kept up between the different factions from the earliest times down to the close of the first quarter of the third century, when Constantine, the great Emperor, called the second, third and fourth centuries, spent their forces in slaughtering their own in the civil power of Rome did not allow them to murder outside, but when the seat got into power under Constantine, the whole order of things was changed; the priesthood was master; the emperor and later the kings were forced servants. The Christian world was an hierarchy, to be ruled by priests, with the Pope at their head. It was a concentrated power under unscrupulous leaders; the will of the priesthood knew no bounds; its word ruled all Christendom; that word was uttered by the Pope; the civil powers moved at his bidding; he made and deposed kings and emperors; the civil powers, though non-Christian, dare not incur his ill-will. In short, the Pope by the aid of the priesthood, ruled all Christendom and a part of Asia and Africa.

This call resulted in the famous Nicene Council, which settled the New Testament canon, at least for a time, and gave to the Christian world the Athanasian Creed, a jargon of meaningless words, which has since been the standard of orthodoxy, a dissent from which, being heresy, the priesthood at all times and in all countries since the adoption of creeds, has, as far as in their power, tortured and put to death all dissenters.

Jews, scholars and witches, the vials of priestly wrath have been poured out without stint, not have we seen dissenters escaped the terrible fate of torture and death at the hands of the priesthood of Christianity. In all this, since the so-called Reformation, the priests of both Catholics and Protestants have vied with each other in these persecutions. Both have used, the same instruments of torture, each trying to outdo the other in its cruelties and the number of its victims.

In each case it is the hell-born priest standing on the authority of his Bible of forgeries—a book that will go down to posterity as the source of more crimes than have ever been committed by any other authority. Read the Old Testament and the New Testament a little better.

Of the 1,400,000,000 of human beings of our world, less than 300,000 are claimed to be Christians. Of this number, only about one-half belong to the several churches, leaving 1,100,000 who are ruled to a greater or less extent by other priests. If we extract from this 300,000,000 the children and the feeble-minded who are not capable of forming correct opinions, and those who use the old ox-eart of Christianity to haul their gods, ware and products to market, a few lone pipers would represent the real believers.

It may seem strange that a priesthood of so small a number have for more than 1,400 years been able to dominate all Christendom, the fairest portion of the same, but the fact exists all the same, to be accounted for on the ground of united action and the determined and desperate character of the priesthood.

After countless ages of religious harmony among the numerous pagan religions of the world, it was left to the priesthood of a miserable bantling to be the first to persecute, torture, mutilate, and finally put to death all who dared call in question the absurd story of the Christian religion—conception, birth of a child, resurrection of the dead, all of which are physical impossibilities, violations of the well-known immutable laws of nature, and an absurd tale of creation when viewed from a rational standpoint by men of letters.

The building up of a great system of religion on such a flimsy basis is conclusive proof that the material used by the priesthood is, intellectually, a little above that possessed by the quadruped. Once so converted, devout believers of Christianity have at all times been of this class. In this respect, mere nominal believers, who support the creed as a financial venture, are not counted, nor are the more thoughtful and intelligent of the priesthood to be

counted as a part of the cattle who follow their leaders.

It is the lives and doings of the wily, cunning, artful, sly order of the priesthood that have called up this discussion.

The quarrels and slaughter heretofore referred to among the Christian sects were only a prelude of what was to follow when the system came into power under Constantine in the fourth century. As children of the second, third and fourth centuries, they spent their forces in slaughtering their own in the civil power of Rome did not allow them to murder outside, but when the seat got into power under Constantine, the whole order of things was changed; the priesthood was master; the emperor and later the kings were forced servants. The Christian world was an hierarchy, to be ruled by priests, with the Pope at their head. It was a concentrated power under unscrupulous leaders; the will of the priesthood knew no bounds; its word ruled all Christendom; that word was uttered by the Pope; the civil powers moved at his bidding; he made and deposed kings and emperors; the civil powers, though non-Christian, dare not incur his ill-will. In short, the Pope by the aid of the priesthood, ruled all Christendom and a part of Asia and Africa.

During a thousand years, known as the Dark Ages, the Pope and his priests succeeded in blotting out every vestige of civilization; libraries were burned; colleges and other schools were closed; the few books that were permitted related to the church and its priests; no writings other than such as support the church were allowed; the old Greek and Roman classics had ceased to exist, except such as were concealed, or had found their way into India, China and other Saracenic lands. The printing press had not been invented; the few books extant could only be reproduced by the slow process of writing.

Under this state of things it is no wonder that the world of Christendom grew dark, and that the darkness became more intense as time went on. The inevitable followed; poverty, piety and crime were fellow travellers. The priesthood, its Pope and church, were all in all, except in Arabia and other lands under Mohammedan rule, where the old classics had been reproduced in translation.

In the place of literature, prostitution and civilization, the priesthood substituted power, poverty and crime—crime on crime, we are told—all committed by the Pope and his priests on unbelievers, which included every variety of opinion out of harmony with the dictates of the Pope and his priesthood. To enforce the hell-born diatum of this hierarchy every instrument which human ingenuity could invent was brought into requisition, not only to torture, but to prolong the suffering of the victims, such as the thumb-screw, iron boot, iron rack for breaking bones and other devices.

As to the kinds of punishment, we find them ranging over all sorts, carving out tongues, hanging by the neck or heels until half dead, then taking the victim down and cutting out his heart, liver and lungs, or burning him to death over a slow fire; sometimes hanging the victims, both men and women, up by the heels over a fire until half dead, then cutting them down to prolong their agony as much as possible before final burning; sometimes women and young girls had poles thrust into their privates and thus carried along the streets until exhausted, when faggots and fire were applied to finish this priestly hellish work.

These tortures are only a few of the many such devices and means used by the priesthood to make Christians out of unbelievers, and to let it be said, the army was at times, especially under Charlemagne, resorted to, when whole tribes and peoples were converted at one single stroke. Once so converted, devout believers of Christianity were the fat of all who dared renounce the new faith.

The number so put to death no one will ever know. Various estimates place the number of

(Continued on Page 4).

BIBLE

What It Is a Question That Cannot Be Answered Intellegently

(By C. E. Johnson.)

The Bible—what is it? is the question that has agitated the minds of thinking man for generations past, and not until the last century has man so boldly spoken his thoughts and sentiments concerning this great storehouse of wisdom.

"Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward." (1 Pet. 2:18.)

"Exhort servants to be obedient unto their masters." (Titus 2:9.)

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor." (1 Tim. 6:1.)

And we find that the Jewish Scriptures also sanctioned slavery: "And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, my children; I will not go out free; then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him unto the door or unto the door-post; and his master shall bore his ears through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever." (Exo. 21:24.)

What is it more horrible than human sacrifices?

God commands Abraham to sacrifice his son: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering." (Gen. 22:13.)

Those desiring further information on this horrible practice might read Jud. 11:26-40; 2 Sam. 21. You talk about heathens and barbarians! What is this? Is it cannibalism? "The fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee and the sons shall eat their fathers." (Ezek. 5:10.)

"And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat." (Lev. 26:29.)

"And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of friend." (Jer. 19:9.)

"And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy son and of thy daughter." (Eze. 9:10.)

So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son and toward her daughter, for she shall eat them." (Deut. 28:53, 57.)

"Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." (John 6:53.)

The Christian sacrament points to the time when savage priests gathered around and dined on human flesh, raw and boiled and upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward the servant of his house, and toward the servant of his children, whom he shall eat." The tender and delicate women among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son and toward her daughter, for she shall eat them."

"The tender and delicate women among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son and toward her daughter, for she shall eat them." (Deut. 28:53, 57.)

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I do not accept the Bible as a moral guide, because it teaches witchcraft. It was through its teachings that the witch-fires burned in Europe for centuries, and nine millions of people went to their deaths just because the Bible says: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." (Exo. 22:18.)

"A man also, or a woman, that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death." (Lev. 20:27.)

A book that is set up to lead people as a moral guide, whose God is a murderer and a guiding hand in a number of foul murders, should be classed as fiction, and the sacred veil torn from its countenance and expose in all its horrible nakedness.

"Spare them not, but slay them both male and female, infant and sucking." (1 Sam. 15:3.)

"Slay both old and young, maidens and little children." (Eze. 9:6.)

"Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood." (Jer. 38:10.)

God's chosen leader for his children was a premeditated murderer.

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coln's Religion," which we pro-
posed in our pamphlet, to be
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We are holding the type, and
will await further expression on
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pamphlet should be put out. Dr. Wilson proposes to add consider-
able important evidence to it. We
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from people saying they would like from 10 to 100 pamphlets as
soon as they came out, but only a
few offers of donations. This
we believe due to those inclined to give, waiting to see what others
intend doing. We should have
started off with a subscription
list in the first place, and will do this now. Dr. Wilson will
give \$5.00, and a modest reader,
who does not care for his name
to be known, will give \$10.00. So
we start off with these:

Dr. J. B. Wilson..... \$5.00
A Friend 10.00

Let us have a response at once,
no matter how small it may be.

Did you overlook the pink slip
in the Blade last week? Some-
body did. This question is one of
tremendous importance to us. You
may think your arrears of
a dollar is a small thing. Yours
is as big as the other man's, and
they are very big to us. You
may think the others will send theirs, and we won't need

yours. We need yours worse
than we do theirs, because we are
waiting for you to send yours
before they send theirs. Perhaps
you have forgotten it. That's
bad for us. Look it up, and
send it now.

When people who profess a religion
do not believe in it themselves,
the natural result is, the
eventual precipitation of social
chaos.

Christianity is played out; it is
an unmilitant religion, and what is
worse, it is a hindrance to any
thing better taking its place to
enlighten and educate the people.

At best man has but a few
years to live, and he strives hard
to waste them by indulging in religion
and politics. Both are evils that will go, glimmering
when man comes into his senses.
Until then we must keep up the
fight against both superstitions.

Many men may believe that
they believe the dogmas of the
Christian faith, but if they will
carefully examine their own
minds they will be forced to the
conclusion that it is, after
a great deal lurking behind it.
To believe in such doctrines
as are promulgated by the
present day church is an outrage upon
the very intelligence of which
they so persistently boast.

Common School is the
breath of life. I tell you the
school house is the fortress of liberty.
As I have said ten thousand
times, the school house is my
cathedral, the teacher is my
preacher. The United States
spends over \$2.50 per pupil in
the public schools; Italy spends 25
cents. In the United States 110
letters, for each individual child
going through the post office, in
Italy only 16 letters. *** And
this is the place where God's
agent lives! I would rather have
one school house than two such
agents.

We must develop the brain, civi-
lize the heart, and, above all
things, we must not forget education
from early days. Nothing
should be taught in the school
that somebody does not know.—
Ingersoll.

ADDRESS

Delivered at the Funeral of Mrs.
Malinda Nauman, December
20, 1909.

(By Henry F. Wagner.)

Friends—

We are assembled on an occasion
of mournful interest. We
have come here to pay the last
tribute of respect to our kind
friend and good neighbor, and to
the devoted wife and cherished
mother of these dear loved ones
whom she has left to mourn her
untimely death.

Death though certain, yet is
often unexpected, and in the case of
this good woman whose frail
form lies mute in our presence, with
the light of the eye now dimmed, with the lips which have
so kindly spoken warm and
friendly greetings, now hushed,
and with the warm heart that has
left for others woes now stilled. It seems that in this
instance death was more sudden
and more unexpected than is
usual, and that it is not the ordinary,
but the extraordinary thing
that has happened to remove this
good woman from us. Two
days ago this evening I sat in
this house visiting with her
and her cherished family, and
she was so joyful, and I not knowing
anything of her affliction, we
pleasantly talked for an hour or
so, and when I left, I was, as usual,
warmly and courteously invited
to come again; but little did I then think that I had looked
upon her smiling countenance
for the last time, and that we had
spoken the last words that should
pass between us. So I say in all
truth and candor that her death was
untimely and her friends and
loved ones mourn.

Here today in this house of
mourning, we view striking in-
stance of the uncertainty of life
and the vanity of all human
works. We can in no way be
further comforted or assisted
to the deceased. The last offices
paid to the dead are only useful
as lectures to the living; from
them we are to derive instruction
and consider every solemnity of
this kind as a summons to prepare
for our own approaching
dissolution. Notwithstanding the
various mementoes of mortality
with which we daily meet, not-
withstanding has established
his empire through all the
works of nature, yet through

some unaccountable infatuation,
we forget that we are born to die. We
go on from one design to another,
add hope to hope, and lay out
plans for employment of
many years, until we are suddenly
alarmed by the approach of
Death, when we least expect him,
and in this at an hour which we
probably conclude to be the meridian
of our existence.

To every person on this earth
death cometh, soon or late.
Wealth cannot bribe him to stay
here; rank and station have
found their end; social distinctions
no longer go, and all the
barriers built in life between man
and man, whether from the
diversity of thought, race, race,
riches, or religion, here vanish
forever in the "silent city of the
dead." Perfect equality now
prevails. The storms of passion,
the ambitions and rivalry, the
hopes and the tears which come
to the living shall never again
disturb her.

The idea of immortality, that
like sea has ebbed and flowed
in the human heart with its
ceaseless waves of health and
sickness, of love and hate, was not
born in a fay book, nor of any
religion. It was born of human
affection, and it will continue
to abide and flow beneath the mists
and clouds of doubt and darkness
as long as love kisses the lips of
death. It is the rainbow hope
shining upon the tears of grief."

We now consign the body of
this loved one to the grave, that
with the lapse of time the law
may be fulfilled, and while we
do with reverence and respect,
with sorrow and regret, all fear is
absent, for nowhere has nature
inspired any. In her triumph and
victory she has now
carried back her own, and to all that
remains of this once dear neighbor
and affectionate sister, we now
bid a long and last farewell!
—Farewell!

Death comes naturally, we
have no choice about our coming
into the world, and likewise have
no choice about our leaving it.
Death is a process of natural development.
And the happy thing about this
life is, that we know not where
it ends. And so this good woman
has not met with the common fate
which all humanity. The high and the low,
the rich and the poor, the learned
and the unlearned, all
must meet on this common
level.

Audelia Schreyer was born in
Clear Creek township, Keokuk
county, Iowa, June 19, 1872. She
lost her mother in childhood, and
was raised to maturity by her
aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. J.
B. Goedelher. She was united in
marriage to L. O. Nauman Dec.
3, 1891. To this union were born
two children, Freeda and Ernest.
She died on December 17, 1909,
in the midst of her usefulness,
when the sun of her destiny had
scarcely reached the noon hour,
leaving two dear but young
twins, a wife, a husband and a host of warm
and true friends to mourn her loss.
She was a woman, kind,
loving and generous. In cases of
sickness and death she always offered
her assistance. She realized
that she had been left helpless
when a child and was lovingly
cared for by others, and she was
always willing to help others
in like circumstances. Let us
profit by her example and do unto
her loved ones, left in their
affliction, as she would have been
inclined to do unto ours under
like circumstances.

As we carry her body to its last
resting place in the silent city of
the dead, let us bear in mind only
her virtues, which were many.
She died in the confidence and
assurance that her memory will be
cherished by those who come after us as we
have gone before us, and as we
deposit her body in the tomb, and
drop the tear of sympathy in the
grave, let charity incline me to
remember that while she has passed
beyond the need of these kind
benefactions we owe each other
in life, yet she still holds a place
in our memory and love, and that we can manifest
that love by sympathy and continued
benefactions to the kind and
affectionate, and devoted husband and
children she left behind, who
will always be reared to
upright manhood and manhood with
the aid and assistance of a mother's wise caution and a
mother's benevolent love. Let each
one of us endeavor to live in
the way and manner so beautifully
expressed by the poet, William
Cullen Bryant, when he said:
"So live, that when thy sun
comes to the innumerable caravan
that moves to those mysterious realms where each
must take his chamber in the silent
halls of death, thou go, not like
the quarry slave at night,
sequestered in his dungeon, but
with an unfaltering trust, appose thy grave,
like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him and lies
down to pleasant dreams."

AT THE GRAVE.

Kind Friends: In silence on
her bosom, nature receives both
the good and the great, the one
who lived and died by faith, and
the one who in reason found his
guide. Belief to her is no virtue,
unbelief no crime; whether
orthodox or heterodox, it is all the
same, and as each and all lie down
to that eternal rest—her boon to
all mankind—they must with
nought but her calm indifference,
the pomp and pride of life stop

four daughters, eleven grand-
children and one great-grandson.

In Independence cemetery, by
the side of his beloved wife, who
preceded him into the great beyond
some two years ago, where
the golden rays of an impartial
sun kiss to life and fragrance
nature's flowers, where
bird and song, vine and blossoms,
immaculate snows and sublime
quietness reign supreme, he was
returned to the bosom of Mother
Earth, the great crucible, where
he stole her heart, "two buttons at
the top and three at the bottom."

Priest—"That's what we do.
I'll remember it in my prayer to-
night at the meetin'."

Put—"T won't do any good,
parson, as long as the wind's in
the west."

She Spoke Truth.

"I am undone!" shrieked the
Tragedy Queen, as she threw her
arms upward with a wild gesture.
"Yes," agreed the Villain, as he
stole a surreptitious glance be-
hind her back, "two buttons at
the top and three at the bottom."

Intelligent Domestic.

Servant: "There is no coal,
unum, an' the fire is goin' out."

Mistress: "Why, Norah, you
should have told me that before."

Servant: "I couldn't have told
you there was no coal, mumm, when
there was coal."—Boston Transcript.

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THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

(By Joel T. Berry.)

There is a sect of Christians called "The Peculiar People," who astonish and offend the Christians by their excessive faith in believing what the Bible tells them. Christian coroners and magistrates condemn and convict them for carrying out the precepts of Jesus, their Master, and James, his apostle.

When they are ill, instead of sending for a physician to cure them, they call in Elders, according to the teaching of their Scriptures, who pray over the sick person, and anoint with oil in the name of the Lord (James 5:14), believing that the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. The promise is corroborated by the writer of Mark: "They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover" (16:18).

Those who cannot believe in Bible promises, such as the late Charles Bradlaugh and others, are sent to prison, and those who do believe in it and try to act upon it are also sent to prison, because the both have the honesty to say so.

Those who do not believe in them, but pretend to do so, condemn the two former, but what an illogical position these administrators of the law take up, for the promises commands are either true or they are untrue. If they admit the latter, they indirectly condemn the very book on which their creed's founded. By thus bringing the Holy Scriptures into ridicule or contempt (as the Blasphemous Laws have it), these dispensers of the law are virtually guilty of blasphemy, and render themselves liable to the Blasphemous Laws, under which Free-thinkers have been persecuted and punished.

We cannot help admiring the honest logic of these poor, deluded people who place implicit faith in their Bible; but what can we think of those who, for respectability's sake, accept the Bible, with all its contradictions, impossibilities and atrocities, while secretly being non-believers, who one moment send people to prison for not believing in the Bible, and at another send people to prison for believing in it?

Wherein is the difference in the measurements of probability in prayers for rain or fine weather, and prayers for the diseased or dying?

The first is called "faith," the other "credulity." But the difference is a difference without a distinction, which is an impossibility.

Do life insurance companies, in preparing their tables, take into consideration the piety or prayerfulness of a district? And are these tables formed on an estimate of the prayers that are likely to go up to the "throne above," or on an estimate of the average longevity of lives? And would they not do so if it could be proved satisfactorily that prayer was really efficacious, and not a mere matter of feeling and sentiment? Is prayer for recovery from illness logical?

We hear from believers, who have perfect assurance and confidence, in being what they claim "saved" of the perpetual bliss "forever" of the hereafter, and happiness reserved for them in Paradise. This being so, how is it that these same people have such a dread of illness and fear of death? Why do they send for the physician immediately when they are ill, and request the prayers of their friends and of the congregation among whom they worship—not, it is observed, that they may depart speedily for Paradise, but that they may recover and remain a little longer in which they call this "miserable wicked world."

We can only conclude that this world is not so distasteful, the bliss of Paradise so inviting and certain as orthodox believers, when they are in the enjoyment of sound health, would have us believe.

The efficacy of prayer is and must be a matter of opinion. To those who choose to spend a considerable portion of their lives in what may appear to rational people as useless praying—for we have seen that no communication can possibly take place between the natural and the supernatural, the sensible and the insensate, the finite and the infinite. All we can say is, let them do so; no fair minded person would wish to deprive the illiterate of their comfort.

It is with a feeling more of sadness than of reproach that we turn our eyes from such, and though their faithfulness may be admired, it is impossible to look with the same equanimity upon the obstinate and culpable credulity of the more intelligent ones, who, men-

tally able to see and to reason, absolutely refuse to do either. But does it not appeal to the mind unfettered by the slavery of custom, that such a waste of valuable time is very shocking to contemplate, and especially so when we consider what might be learned concerning the truth of the various phenomena that are daily exhibited, which are now as yet but dim plumes to the person of faith. Worth the time devoted to the study of Science, and these credulous persons who display such culpable ignorance in even the elementary science, told that they were guilty of similar superstitions to the savages in the heart of Africa, they would be much astonished as we may be at their credulity.

The idea of incessant divine intervention, in opposition to the operation of varying law, will always be supported and encouraged by a priesthood, since it must desire to be considered as standing between the prayer of the votary and providential act.

Astronomical predictions of all kinds, says Draper, depend upon the admission of the fact that there never has been, and never will be, any intervention in the operation of natural laws. The scientific philosopher avers that the world at any given moment is the direct result of its condition in the preceding moment and the direct cause of its condition in the subsequent moment. Law and Chance are only names given to mechanical necessity.

Every event has its warrant in some preceding event and gives warrant to others that may follow." Again he says: "It has always been inexpedient to admit the prevalence of law of any kind as opposed to providential intervention. It was considered derogatory to the majesty of God that that will should be fettered in any way."

We are justified in expressing wonder and admiration, if not reverence, in contemplating the magnificence of the visible universe; the marvelous beauty and harmony of nature, and her grand and immutable laws, our own existence, and that of all other life by which we are surrounded. We are also justified in recognizing the existence of an inscrutable power behind the scenes manifested around us, but to attribute all this magnificent result of natural laws to a man-like deity, given to anger, cruelty and vindictiveness—one god among a number of others, and jealous of the others, demanding worship in the form of cringing self-abasement, flattery and adulation—is to reduce humanity, in a manner to the lowest species of animal life, and the human mind to a state of primitive cowardice and fear.

Such gross and ignorant notions, fostered through many centuries of priesthood, have been the means of keeping men in darkness; have led them astray from the truth, and have delayed the progress and development of science and the advancement of knowledge.

With the disappearance of an anthropomorphic God, with human attributes, there disappears also not only lip-worship, but divine worship of any sort. Mr. Herbert Spencer says that worship is not mere lip-homage, but a homage expressed in actions; not a mere respect, but a respect given by the sacrifice of time, thought and labor." Again, he says: "It is the neglect of science that is irreligious." *** It is the refusal to study the surrounding creation—the universe and its cause, that is irreligious. Not only does man kind forget, but without fully digesting things which they daily proclaim to be so wonderful, but they frequently condemn as mere triflers those who give time to the observation of nature, and actually scorn those who show any active interest in these marvels. Devotion to science is a tacit worship—a tacit recognition of worth in the things studied, and by implication in their cause."

For a more concise view of this subject, see "First Principles," by Herbert Spencer, or "Evolution of Man," by Dr. Huxley.

SOCIETY NEEDS CIVILIZING.

The world is not yet civilized. The twilight of barbarism yet lingers and the spirit of savagery is still dominant. The war club has been exchanged for the police baton, and the spear is supplanted by the bayonet. But under the gilt and conventional cant of things as they are beats the heart of savagery, and the genius of the present social order is brutality and violence. This so-

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sailed Christian civilization is a duplex delusion, a sixteen-stringed humbug of mastodonic proportions, a scintillating sham sufficiently self-evident for a show-down. The present social order is propped by force and fraud and bulwarked by human stupidity. Society is turned upside down, and what should be on top is at the bottom and what should be at the bottom is on top.—Ross Winn.

HELL.

(By C. E. Johnson.)

Hell is a place where the Bruises, Bruises and Ingrels are confined, where the eternal punishment of hell-fire and brimstone and the fated destiny of all other intellectual men and women who do not believe Bible bosh and ghost stories.

This tale of fickle superstition, born in the mind of ignorance, and rooted in the savage brain of primitive man, is like the story of Vulcan, the god of fire, who on his anvil forged the thunderbolts of the gods.

From below came sounds of a mighty hammer on a vast anvil while from the mountain summit issued the black smoke and lurid glow of Vulcan's forge. They could not know and could not understand that the Vulcan whom they imagined about as a natural cause, one of the grand and marvelous works of nature.

This is how hell came to exist in the mind of man—through the fear of some phenomena of nature that ignorant man could not understand.

Ignorance is the mother of superstition, and ignorance taught their children that deep down in the earth was a hell of fire and brimstone, whose fires never ceased burning, and that there is a devil at the door of this fiery furnace, who stands guard over this great vault of unquenchable fire for all time to come. Should you disobey the wishes of god when the time comes to die, you will be transferred to the mighty fires of Satan's hell, and there endure the long suffering of eternity.

This superstition, which was born of Mother Ignorance, is one of the greatest curses that ever was instilled into the mind of illiterate and unthinking man.

Ah, Ignorance and Superstition, your death is fast approaching. Your struggles will soon be over, for I can see the torch of reason casting its intellectual rays of mental freedom over the whole world.

Herald the new day, the new era, the new civilization, for it is close at hand.

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Voltaire's life is a history of the world

PRIESTHOOD.

(Continued from Page 1).
priestly victims from twenty to fifty millions. This does not include the 100,000,000 who, Prof. Draper says, lost their lives by the twenty-years' war to recover Spain and Africa, brought on by the priesthood; nor does it include the lives needlessly lost in the 200 years of the Crusades, or those whose lives were given up in the 250 years of the strife between the Catholics and Protestants (Huguenots), where the priests exhibited equal cruelty to their opponents; nor does it include the extermination of the Albigenses, a powerful Christian sect, by the Catholics, or the slaughter of the English Catholics by the Episcoparians, after the Pope's party had been driven from England.

In the long siege of some 1400 years from Constantine to the close of the seventeenth century, while the priesthood held the fort, about 200,000,000 of human beings were sacrificed by them to perpetuate their power in building up the world. Disraeli, Christians, as well as Jews, and other heretics, went down to death at the hands of the priesthood, who, as a general rule, forced the civil authorities to do the killing.

In the face of all this historical evidence, and much more, that might be added, the priesthood, Catholic and Protestant, are ever babbling of the blessings of Christianity—a system whose priests slaughtered their millions and rejoiced over the prolonged suffering and terrible agony of their victims.

The priesthood, from the remotest antiquity to the present, has been the bane of the human race. The Christian priesthood, in particular, to its other crimes, been an enemy to progress, a stumbling block in the path of civilization, the opposer of every advanced thought, the destroyer of all useful books, and the opposer of every science—the great devilish of the world, whose octopian arms everywhere have encircled its countless victims. Its claims of merit are standing lies to entrap the unwary; not a benefit has it ever conferred on mankind. In addition to its other crimes, it has created an imaginary hell of eternal torments, as a means of forcing tribute from the weak-minded.

Lastly, it has erected numerous toll-gates along the great highway of life, where it stands sentinel, demanding tithes of the faithful, for which it promises a passport to the Elysian fields and an eternal home in heaven.

If the world will ever have peace and liberty, the priesthood must be exterminated, peacefully if possible, but totally annihilated. Introduce into the schools the bloody history of the priesthood from Constantine down to the close of the seventeenth century. Let a few young men who will not be led astray tell the hell on the death of Christianity, whose fate, though prolonged for a time, is fixed by the inexorable decrees of evolution.

MRS. RICKER'S CANDIDACY.

(Dover (N. H.) Times.)

The prompt recognition of Mrs. Marilla Ricker's gubernatorial candidacy by The Times seems to afford the Republican managers of the state an easy way out of a serious difficulty. That trouble has been confronting them for some time has been sharply manifest. It is not that there are not still men enough in the party who are as well qualified as any available, but of those whom they have been putting there for the last half century, but the difficulty is to find a man who wants or is willing to take the office or at least to run for it, upon whom both the stalwarts and half breeds, machinists and reformers, conservatives and progressives, regulars and insurgents can rally.

The Woodville News names 18 men still left in the party, any one of whom it thinks fit for Governor, and hints that there are others not named; but it is unable to single out one upon whom it will guarantee an agreement by the rival camps, and the longer the selection is delayed the more doubtful the success of the man proposed before the primaries when voting time comes. Neither the News nor any other Republican paper, or leader, can name a man upon whom success at the primaries as an aspirant for the Republican nomination—much less as a candidate before the people—it would dare stake a

penny or a year's subscription. But this Mrs. Ricker candidacy, backed by The Times, puts an entirely different aspect upon the situation.

Marilla is a Republican, dyed in the wool, and if not a yard wide, broad enough to stand squarely in her own boots and tie up with no faction. Any member of the Republican party can support her heartily and consistently, so far as politics may be concerned, though of course, she is not running on a partisan platform. She has been contending on "Woman's Rights" platform for which she has been contending for the last half century, or a considerable portion thereof at least; and on that platform, and in defense of these principles, machine and insurgent can cheerfully unite.

There has been no more decided advocate of Woman Suffrage in all these years than Senator Gallinger, the boss Republican machinist of the State. Governor Quinby himself is an ardent advocate of the cause. Remick and Burroughs and Benton and Churchill and Bass, of the reform army, are supporters of the deepest dye. Lloyd, the machinist, has always been found on the side of the fair sex, in their contention for equal rights. Here, then, is common ground for the whole crowd. Falling in behind The Times and training under the Ricker banner, their differences will be forgotten, and the day of discomfiture delayed if not avoided.

There is nothing in the Constitution or the statutes to preclude a woman from running for or holding any office in the state, from Governor down. Judge Doe once held that she could not be a notary public; but Judge Doe was a lout unto himself. He has passed on, but Marilla Ricker still lives and is running for Governor on her own merits. The chances are that she will get a following such as no male Republican could command. Henry Robinson who has sulked in his tent, as will be, for some years past, will be in the forefront.

He will gird up his loins, take a hitch in his suspender, pull down his vest, roll up his sleeves, turn down his collar, and saunter against all comers who dare antagonize the woman whose friend and admirer he has been, lo these many years. And with Henry, there will rally a host of others who have found nothing to incite them to action in recent issues.

As for the Democrats, they will find no difficulty in rallying to the standard. Branch and Parker, of the Old Guard, and Davis and Carr, of the Young Guard, have along been equal suffragists. They will fall into procession side by side with their former adversaries, as naturally as water runs down hill. There seems now to be no good reason why we should not make it unanimous for Marilla, both at the primaries and at the general election, thus saving the Republicans from the threatened dilemma and insuring the state a governor who will do things. All that is wanted now to insure the complete success of the project is the approval and cooperation of Lyndsay, Carroll and B. Frank Tucker, for which there is strong ground.

BIBLE.

(Continued from Page 1.)
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God was a great general in war. He directed his armies and disciplined his men in the feats of war.

"Blessed is the Lord, my strength, which teacheth my way and my fingers to fight hands to war and my fingers to fight." (Ps. 144:1.)

"Ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein." (Num. 33:52, 53.)

I have mentioned only a few of the horrors and abominable teachings in this foul book—the foulest and most degrading in all literature. It creates demons, devils and courtesans of the famous red light districts and downtown slums. Every great crime or cruel wrong is sanctioned by this foul demon of literature, which is a disgrace to the bookshelves of our civilization.

It is a drawback to progress, a disgrace to morality, a viper which has for centuries preyed on the credulity of mankind.

Madill, Okla.

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JAMES E. HUGHES, Lexington, Ky.

OBITUARY.

Mahala Potts Ellsworth was born in Salem, Maine, Dec. 8th, 1836. She was the youngest of a family of eight children, all of whom preceded her in death.

She was united in marriage to Benj. Peabody on the 15th of March, 1857, at Freeman, Maine.

Mr. and Mrs. Peabody embarked for the West in November, 1863 and located on a farm near Utica, Minn. To this union seven children were born—four boys and three girls. One son, Amos, was killed by lightning in 1869, at the age of five years. Mr. and Mrs. Peabody moved to St. Charles, Minn., in 1894. About three years ago, Mrs. Peabody met with a painful accident, that has caused her many months of suffering. She never fully recovered her strength, but was a marvel of patience and fortitude to friends and family all thru this ordeal.

Three years ago, the 15th of March, Mr. and Mrs. Peabody celebrated the 50th anniversary of their wedding day. It was an occasion which all who were present will long remember. Their home has been the scene of many festivities and family gatherings. Those who have known Mrs. Peabody best will long cherish the memory of her many virtues, her kind words and loving deeds.

Even thru all her sufferings her greatest concern was for the comfort of those about her—her children, grandchildren and husband. She had a smile and kind word for them all. Her life was one of unselfishness, honesty, integrity and true morality. She was a noble wife, a devoted mother and a sincere friend.

She passed away March 18th, 1910, and was buried at Utica, Minn. Rev. Hamlin, of the Methodist Church, assisted by Mrs. L. Patterson, conducted the services at the house and grave. The casket was loaded with beautiful flowers, gifts of relatives and friends. Miss Nona Cave sang beautifully, "Face to Face," and "Crossing the Bar," and two selections were sung by a quartet.

Once more we are brought face to face with that mystery which man calls death. Death is a monarch who reigns over all creatures that live upon the earth. We are born with death in us, and when our bodies are worn out, death snaps the silver cord and hushes our voices in silence.

Human life is curiously invested with love, to violate which is to blot out the candle of our existence. The pale horse and his rider are no respecters of persons. They cut down the strong man who seems to be in possession of all his powers, and beauty of youth and the smiling babe in its mother's arms.

Those who understand and obey the laws of health may, for a time, if they have no inherited disease, escape the touch of this hand of death. But sooner or later the wintry frost nips the flower of life and we are gone forever.

As death is both natural and inevitable, it becomes us as rational beings to regard it calmly, and if by knowledge of and obedience to the laws of life, we may give our existence a free and full opportunity to run out its three score years and ten, we shall not be so reluctant to pass away.

In that mellow age, man sinks as tranquilly into the sleep of death as an infant falls asleep on its mother's breast. In youth we cling to life; we are terrified at the very thought of personal dissolution. This youthful tenacity of life is like the green apple which clings to the branch, and cannot be plucked from it, except by breaking the twig upon which it grows. Old age, on the other hand, has lost its strong attachment to life. It is like the ripe apple of autumn, yet touches gently and it drops freely into your hand. Death at the ripe old age is as natural and beneficent as birth was at the beginning.

It is quite natural for all thoughtful persons to try to lift the veil which hides the future from us. It is quite natural to have some opinions and theories; but at this point, where the wise men of all ages and all nations have been silent, it becomes us to be modest in our belief and charitable in our speech. But this we do know: There is some good in all. It is clearly the duty of every rational being to do as much good and as little evil as possible.

Let us then endeavor to cultivate a sympathy so true, a helpfulness so great, a charity so broad, that it may embrace humanity and crowd all evil from our hearts. Let us then live our lives as we were born at the beginning.

So live then, when thy summons comes to join the innumerable caravan which moves

To that mysterious realm where each shall take His chamber in the silent halls of death.

Thou go not like the quarry slaves at night,

Scourged and beaten to his dungeon; but sustained and soothed

By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave

Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch

About him, and lies down to a pleasant dream."

The following poem was read at the funeral:

SHADOW.

about the heart, Yet the deluded summons forces us to part. Clinging arms would hold them, Strive to draw them back, For the stream is turbid, and the skies are black. O, thou untried future, could our hearts but know Of our loved ones' journey, when from us they go;

Could our hearts but fathom all the great unknown, Into whose dim shadows they must walk alone. But above the river droops the misty cloud, Hiding them forever in a sable shroud.

Could our mortal vision pierce the mystery, That so darkly shadows this uncertainty?

Could there be that stretches like a mile between,

For a brief moment let us view the scene;

All the strange, unthought-of, unknown things that be in that region boundless that eternity.

But the misty shadow o'er the future lies,

And the sullen river mocks our streaming eyes.

Are they gone forever,—those we call our own?

Will they give no answer? Silence hath no tone.

Shall we never, never see their faces more

Till we cross the river to that far-off shore?

And if there be a meet them, we must greet them how?

Will they be our own then, just as they are now?

Is our love eternal? If we could but know,

Tho' part is bitter, we could let them go.

Must we plead forever? Is there none can tell?

Of that mystic region where our loved ones dwell?

Is there any future? Must we ask in vain?

Will we in the future meet our own again?

O, the doubts and shadows that around us fall,

Shroud our gloomy spirits in a sable pall.

Is our love eternal? If we could but know,

ho' to part is bitter, we could let them go.

Where the honest feelings will not end in pain? Those we love the dearest will be ours again? Parting is so bitter; Is there naught of sweet? Is there not a home where we all shall meet?

Tell us of a future, so beautiful and grand, Tell us we shall meet them in a better land. Some sweet word of comfort kindly to speak, For our hearts are breaking, and our faith is weak.

If there is a future fraught with joys more pure, The great pain of parting will the bliss obscure. Days will pass so slowly, 'tis so very far.

To that land eternal, where our loved ones are; Yet the pain and anguish we could better bear

If we knew that sometime we should meet them there. O, the hardest lessons coaxed thru the weary years,

Lessons not completely learned e'en thru our smiles and tears.

We are vainly groping for the golden chain,

That, with scarce a warning, death has rent in twain... O, the links thus broken, time will not restore;

Will the tie thus severed part us evermore?

Must we plead forever? Is there none can tell?

Of that mystic region where our loved ones dwell?

Is there any future? Must we ask in vain?

Will we in the future meet our own again?

O, the doubts and shadows that around us fall,

Shroud our gloomy spirits in a sable pall.

Is our love eternal? If we could but know,

ho' to part is bitter, we could let them go.

Whatever may be God's future, there will still remain his past. If the lives whom in the future he is to bless are to be witnesses to his divine goodness, the lives whom in the past he has blighted will still cry to him out of the ground; and, since the thief maintains that he is the same yesterday, today and forever, the hand which is red with the millions of years of murder will never cease to incardine all the seas of eternity.—W. H. Mallock.

DOG FENNEL

in

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by

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